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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 7465
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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4079
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1476
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 4125
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 3218
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 8063
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 5671
RUEHON/AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY 0425
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2386
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 COLOMBO 001450

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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS, G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKA: AMBASSADOR LAUNCHES US-FUNDED
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS INITIATIVE

REF: A. COLOMBO 1304

[1](#)B. COLOMBO 1188

[1](#)C. STATE 113842

[1](#)D. AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)1. Summary. Ambassador on October 18 hosted a press event to launch a Department of State and USAID-funded anti-trafficking program implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The event received wide coverage in the Sri Lankan media. The Sri Lanka Police's Women's and Children's Bureau Director A.R. Waidyalankara said the GSL considers trafficking in persons to be a "very serious issue," and welcomed the new program. He also noted that a GSL coordinating committee on trafficking will soon be formed. IOM announced that it will co-host with the GSL a roundtable event in mid-November to raise awareness within the government and promote support for a national anti-trafficking policy. The GSL coordination committee, roundtable in November, and proposed national policy on trafficking are all welcome steps in addressing Sri Lanka's TIP problem. End Summary.

[1](#)2. Ambassador on October 18 hosted a press event to launch a U.S. funded anti-trafficking program implemented by IOM. The \$500,000 project, co-funded by USAID and the Department of State, will train 500 law enforcement and government officials on human trafficking; improve methods of data collection, dissemination, and tracking; and enhance coordination among government and nongovernmental organizations. The press event was extensively covered by all three of Sri Lanka's English-language daily newspapers, two Sinhala and two Tamil newspapers, as well as several television and radio stations.

[1](#)3. IOM's new Chief of Mission in Sri Lanka Mohamed Adbiker noted the need to curb human trafficking in Sri Lanka before it reaches epidemic proportions. He said that war, unemployment, and natural disasters have increased Sri Lankans' vulnerability to trafficking.

¶4. Director of the Sri Lanka Police's Women's and Children's Bureau A.R. Waidyalankara said the GSL considers trafficking in persons to be a "very serious issue." He welcomed the new program, which he said "will help us more vigorously identify and prosecute the perpetrators of human trafficking." Waidyalankara also noted that a GSL coordinating committee on trafficking will soon be formed. Headed by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Development, the body will monitor trafficking issues, identify challenges and make policy decisions to address those issues, he said.

¶5. Ambassador commended the GSL on its efforts to address human trafficking including amending its penal code in April 2006 to criminalize trafficking crimes in compliance with UN Trafficking Protocol standards and ratifying the South Asian regional convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution. He noted, however, that "Sri Lanka needs a better trained network of law enforcement professionals to establish legal grounds under which instigators of trafficking can be identified and prosecuted under the law." The initiative that was being announced will, he said, "help train Government of Sri Lanka officials to pursue criminal investigations and prosecutions of trafficking offenses more aggressively."

¶6. On October 18, Poloff attended a coordination meeting at IOM to discuss the implementation of this project. This monthly meeting is attended by the Embassy, USAID, Salvation Army, Solidarity Center, the Sri Lanka Police, the Foreign Employment Bureau, the Attorney General's department, and other relevant GSL agencies. IOM announced that it will co-host with the GSL a roundtable event in mid-November to bring together even more stakeholders and interested

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organizations. The event will focus on raising awareness of trafficking within the GSL, and attempt to get buy-in from various parts of the GSL on a national anti-trafficking policy.

¶7. COMMENT: The launch of this joint Department of State and USAID anti-trafficking program was well publicized and well received. We were pleased that the Sri Lanka police chose to participate and state publicly the GSL's intent to proactively address human trafficking. The GSL coordination committee, roundtable in November, and proposed national policy on trafficking are all welcome steps in addressing the TIP problem. Post will continue to closely coordinate with the GSL, as well as IOM, on these efforts.
MOORE